



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

Monday, February 26, 2007

CONTACT: Nicki Olsen, City of Great Falls, (406) 455-8510

Marissa Kozel, Montana Department of Commerce, (406) 841-2772

Made in Montana Marketplace Returns to Great Falls

More than 100 Vendors to Showcase Montana Made Creations

(HELENA) – If you like unique, locally made products, brimming with authentic Montana flavor, then you'll love the Made in Montana Marketplace.

The 2007 Made in Montana Marketplace and trade show will be at the Mansfield Convention Center in Great Falls, March 2 and 3. This annual two-day trade show connects buyers looking for Montana products, with the people who produce them.

"The Made in Montana Marketplace is an invaluable opportunity for Montana's entrepreneurs to show their ingenuity and craftsmanship," said Governor Brian Schweitzer. "The show shines a spotlight on Montana's unique qualities, and that glow is seen all around the world."

At least 109 vendors from across the state will showcase dozens of creations, from hand crafted furniture to gourmet snacks. Hundreds of buyers from department stores, grocery stores, gift shops and National Park stores are expected to attend. Friday, March 2 is Wholesale Buyer's Day, and is only open to qualified buyers and the media. Saturday, March 3 is Retail Sales Day, and is open to the public.

"The Made in Montana Marketplace attracts buyers that supply stores all over the country, and the exposure can be life changing for some of our small businesses," said Commerce Director Anthony Preite. "One day you're selling jam to the local grocery store, and the next day you have orders coming in from a national chain."

The Montana Department of Commerce and the Montana Department of Agriculture started the original Made in Montana Food & Gift Show in 1998, however the Martz Administration cut funding for the show in 2004. The Schweitzer Administration restored funding to help sponsor the rebirth of the show in 2005. In 2006, The City of Great Falls assumed production of the show and renamed it the Made in Montana Marketplace. The Department of Commerce and the Department of Agriculture remain chief sponsors of the Marketplace today.

“The City of Great Falls is extremely excited to kick off its second Made in Montana Marketplace,” said Dona Hughes, events supervisor for the Mansfield Events Office at the Civic Center. “We expect hundreds of people to attend this event and their spending power has enormous potential to impact the City of Great Falls, and vendors from other communities.”

Planned Schedule:

9:00 AM, Friday, March 2: Show Opens

- **Exhibitor Welcome & Media Kickoff featuring:**
 - Lt. Governor John Bohlinger
 - Montana Department of Commerce Director Anthony Preite
 - Great Falls Mayor Dona Stebbins

4:00 AM - 6:00 PM: Buyer’s Reception

- Honoring buyers, exhibitors and invited guests
- Recognition to sponsors: Montana Department Commerce, Montana Department of Agriculture, MSU-Great Falls, and Montana small businesses
- Presentation of the “Best in Show” exhibitor award

9:00 AM Saturday, March 3: Show Opens to the Public

- \$3.00 fee per person
- More than 2,000 shoppers expected

###